

St. Johnsbury

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St. Johnsbury Caledonian.

A Week in the Troad.

By C. A. SAYAGE.

(Continued from last week.)

We bade our readers good-bye last week by the ruined city of Arablar. It was near night when we arrived at the little Turkish town of Bonnarbashi, and we felt that we were treading on classic ground. The great question may never be settled, but a large number of the scientific men who have asked themselves *abi Troya fuit*, and have made investigations on the subject, have decided that must have been on the heights just back of Bonnarbashi. It is a wretched Turkish village that stands on the spot, remarkable principally for its storks. The Turks hold them in great veneration, and consider it a remarkably good omen if one will build its nest on their roof or chimney top. The village of Bonnarbashi is highly favored, for I suppose that on the 40 houses there are 50 storks, and the great long-legged fellows stand on their chimney nests on a summer evening, and chatter their bills until one imagines that the whole army of the Greeks with their brazen armor is coming.

It was Saturday night. Jones did not want to stay there that night, and had known that our principles did not allow us to travel on Sunday, he would have looked sooner than he did. There was no place for his horses he said, and no grain. I suppose the poor fellow told the truth, for he had to turn his horses out to grass, and stay out himself all night to watch them lest they be stolen. He wanted to ride on some two miles further to the farm of Mr. Calvert, and we afterwards met the day we did not follow his advice, but we knew that Mr. C. was not at home, and did not know as it would be quite the thing to go and quarter ourselves, five men and five horses on his servants over Sunday. So Jones had to consent, and we pitched our tent at Bonnarbashi for the night.

There are two questions of vital interest and importance to the student of Homer, and the ancient classics. They are, 1st. Where was ancient Troy? 2d. Was it anywhere? I have placed them in this apparently illogical order, because it is precisely this order that they assume in the mind of the one who investigates the subject. He goes to the place which for 2700 years has been called the plain of Troy, expecting at once to decide the question where the famous city stood, and he comes away with his mind troubled with the question, did the old city exist at all? It is a sad thing to find that the rock to which one has anchored his faith of whatever kind has broken from its foundation and is drifting away. Poor hours and William Tell were once as real characters to me as the apostle Paul and the lovely sister of Lazarus, and I have not yet recovered from the shock that my mind received when I first heard doubts thrown upon their reality. I once believed in Troy as firmly as in Jerusalem. The story of its sad fate was my first introduction to the ancient classics, and to it I pinned my classical faith. It is not then a pleasant thing to have a doubt thrown upon the reality of its existence, except in the imagination of the past.

I premise what I have to say of Troy, not by thus suggesting the possibility, not because I fully believe that such was the case, but because I am convinced that it may be, and because of the difficulties that present themselves in trying to identify the places described by Homer. I may here say however, that after a careful examination of the ground, I am convinced that there is no place in the Troad that will fulfill all the requirements of the Iliad. Nor would it be probable that such a place could be found. A poet of the present day, with nothing but local traditions to rely upon for information, would not be likely to describe very accurately events that took place during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, but this is precisely what is demanded of Homer by those who regard the minutiæ of the Iliad, as a record of facts. Supposing, then, that the Iliad is founded upon facts, viz., that there was a city of Troy, and that it was destroyed by an invasion of Greeks, we come to the question, where was it? A certain writer, I do not remember who, has placed it in Egypt. Others have supposed it to have been on the site where afterwards was built Alexandria Troas, but with these few exceptions every one has supposed it to have been somewhere on the plateau which runs along the east side of the Trojan plain.

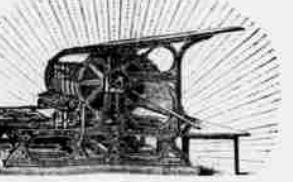
The Trojan rivers have been a perplexing subject to all who have explored the locality. Homer seems to make the Scamander the principal river of the plain, and there can be little doubt that the name has been preserved in the Menderes, the large river which rises at the foot of Mt. Ida, and flows through the whole length of the plain, emptying into the Hellespont. It is the only one of the Trojan streams that would be likely to have been styled as "the river sprung from deathless Jove." Homer speaks of it as

"the mighty stream
valued Xanthos by the mortals but by men
Scamander."

With the Best Market Afloat.
The Troad is where this river-god takes sides
For the Trojans and tries to overwhelm
the world by his reports of the palace and treasure of Priam that he had discovered.

But notwithstanding the testimony of tradition in his favor, I am inclined to believe he is at work in the wrong place, and that Troy was situated some

other place, or with the best market afloat.
This man who threatens soon to overthrow King Priam's noble city, for no more
than a bribe, calls in and examine my



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four miles farther south, at the head of the Trojan plain, on the heights near Bonnarbashi. I should hardly venture to express this as my opinion, had not many learned men done the same before me, and their arguments seem to me after having examined both sides, to outweigh the very doubtful theory of tradition.

Not far from Bonnarbashi the river Scamander makes a sharp bend like an ox bow, and projecting out into the bow is a craggy bluff on which it is supposed the city of Troy stood. It is a magnificent site, overlooking all the plain as far as the Hellespont, where were moored the ships of the Greeks, the Egean and the islands in it. The bluff stands some three hundred feet above the bed of the Scamander, the rocks on two sides being very precipitous, and the Aeropods. Pergamus, and stretching down the hill in front of it, for a mile perhaps, as far as the village of Bonnarbashi, was the city, surrounded by a strong wall, the Scamander being just where one would leave the city on entering the plain. One struck at first sight by the magnificence of the site an ancient city. "It contains," says Leake in his Asia Minor, "all the requisites one is accustomed to look for, a height overlooking a fertile maritime plain, situated at a sufficient distance from the sea to be secure from the attacks of pirates, and furnished with a copious and perennial supply of water, presenting a very strong and healthy position for the city; and by the citadel, a hill beyond the reach of bow shot from the neighboring heights, defended at the back by steep rocks and precipices, surrounded by a deep valley and broad, torrent, and backed beyond the river by mountains which supplied timber and fuel. It fulfills in a striking manner most of the requirements for the site of Troy, which Homer continually speaks of as 'solid,' 'wind-swept,' 'strongly built,' 'well defended.' While that Troy *magis* have been built on the bluff does not at all prove that it was built there, it still seems probable that those who founded the city would have selected the most favorable location in the vicinity for it; and certainly there is no other spot in the Troad that can begin to compare with the heights of Bonnarbashi.

Near the summit of the hill there are three tunnels, one of which goes by the name of the "Tomb of Hector." There is little ground to believe in its genuineness, as Homer says that Hector was buried outside the city walls, and this spot must have been within. I took a stock of souvenirs from the mound, however, and fired my revolver three times from its summit in honor of the hero, as when I visit such places. I like to give loose reins to my credulity. Some excavations have been made on the Aeropods, and massive foundations of the ancient citadel wall have been laid bare for some distance. Colicos found here prove that a Greek city stood on the spot down to about 200 B.C., but I flatter myself that I have a part of the original wall of Pergamus. In some such way as this many are losing the sacredness of their Sabbath. Nature, they say, is God's priestess, and they will worship him by communing with her. To seek health under the open sky is a duty no less sacred than to listen to sermons. Love is divine, and home a pure Eden which God's own sons as well as angels have built it.

Besides, if we ascribe to the poet an entry in the main details of his story, it is difficult to see nevertheless that he crowds into the six weeks the time of the action of the poem—the principal events of the whole war, and that what he speaks of as happening in a single day may have spread out over many.

(Continued next week.)

And all men ill thy channel from its springs
And sommon all thy brooks, and litt on high
A mighty wave and roll along thy bed
Stung in one great torrent, trees and stones
That we may tame this savage man, who now
In triumph walks the field, and bears himself
As if he knew no god!

One difficulty in identifying these rivers arises from the fact that Homer speaks of the springs I have mentioned as the source of the Scamander, whereas the source of the Menderes is at Mt. Ida twenty or thirty miles away, and the stream flowing from the springs is comparatively insignificant. This has led some to suppose that the large river is the Simois, and that the Scamander was derived from having its source in the perennial life-giving fountain. I am inclined however to consider the stream flowing from them the Simois, and being a branch of the Scamander, its springs might properly be spoken of by a poet as the sources of the latter river.

There are some objections to the theory that Bonnarbashi was the site of Troy, among which is the fact which we observed, that Mt. Ida is hidden from it by another range of hills, and Jupiter is represented as sitting on this mountain to watch the city and the movements of the two armies. But he is said to have done the same from Mt. Olympus, which is entirely out of sight from the distance. We must suppose that his all seeing eyes could look through mountains or over their summits as well as where a mortal's vision would be impeded. Another objection to the Bonnarbashi theory is its distance from the sea, which is out of sight from the distance. We must suppose that his all seeing eyes could look through mountains or over their summits as well as where a mortal's vision would be impeded. Another objection to the Bonnarbashi theory is its distance from the sea, which is out of sight from the distance. 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